

# ECONOMIC ELEMENT

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

Prepared by the Economic Advisory Committee  
and the  
Department of Planning and Building

with assistance from  
MUNDIE & ASSOCIATES

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## Executive Summary



Avila Valley

### Why an Economic Element?

To help assure that San Luis Obispo County reaps the advantages of economic prosperity and avoids the disadvantages that may be created by inappropriate growth, the Board of Supervisors commissioned the Economic Advisory Committee, with assistance from the Planning Department, to undertake preparation of an Economic Element of the County General Plan that would:

- Establish a commitment to economic vitality that will provide for the current and future needs of all County residents.
- Set priorities for types and locations of economic development that are desirable in San Luis Obispo County.
- Identify strategies for retaining existing businesses and attracting new ones that provide employment for County residents.

### What Is It?

The Economic Element contains goals, policies, and programs that establish a context and priorities for economic development in San Luis Obispo County. The goals of the Economic Element recognize the importance of economic activity in enabling the residents of San Luis Obispo to find employment and pursue the lifestyles that they value. The policies and programs for each goal describe principles that will guide decision-making and actions that will be taken to achieve those goals.

Many of the goals and policies in the Economic Element were previously adopted (in some form) in other elements of the General Plan, and some of the programs are already in place.

The goals address four aspects of economic development:

**Goal 1. Promote a strong and viable local economy by pursuing policies that balance economic, environmental, and social needs of the county.**

Economic activity is important, but equally important are environmental and social factors that contribute to the County's quality of life.

**Goal 2. Create a diverse economy.**

Economic development will be most beneficial to San Luis Obispo County if it includes a variety of economic activities, so that the risks associated with business cycles for particular industries are avoided, and a variety of occupations, so that workers with different sets of skills will be able to find employment.

**Goal 3. Assure the provision of strategically-located opportunities for economic development.**

Economic development, except for rural activities such as agriculture and outdoor recreation, should be located in or near existing cities or unincorporated communities (urban reserves and villages) and areas approved as new urban reserves and villages in the County Land Use Element, to facilitate access to existing infrastructure and economic support systems as well as protect the natural environment of rural areas.

**Goal 4. Provide support for economic development in San Luis Obispo County.**

While the designation of sites for economic development is an important component of an economic development strategy, other types of support are necessary as well. They include, for example, attention to permit processing, access to financing, education of workers and future workers, and business and community support for business.

**Key Ideas**

The goals, policies, and programs of the Economic Element, if adopted, would apply to County decisions for the unincorporated area only.

The Economic Element provides a coherent approach for considering plans and projects in the unincorporated area (subject to County jurisdiction) and for encouraging economic development that is consistent with other County values (such as protecting the environment and addressing social needs). It does not, however, change land use designations or otherwise alter any adopted elements of the General Plan (including area plans).

## **What Would it Do?**

Although some of the programs recommended in the draft Economic Element are already in place in San Luis Obispo County, others are new in this element. Key components of the element are programs to:

- Collect and disseminate information about business conditions in San Luis Obispo County, including the availability of sites for development
- Work with existing County businesses seeking to move or expand and with out-of-County companies considering a move to the mid-Coastal area
- Encourage the development of business activities that are considered particularly well-suited to San Luis Obispo County, including computer-based businesses, environmental-based businesses, agriculture-based businesses, service-based businesses, and variety of tourism opportunities.
- Facilitate the timely processing of development proposals to achieve a balance among social, economic, and environmental concerns.
- Target infrastructure improvements to enhance development feasibility
- Work with the private sector to increase the availability of financing for business development and expansion
- Coordinate with cities and unincorporated communities to define and achieve mutual economic development goals
- Coordinate with educational institutions and job training programs to assure the availability of an appropriately-skilled labor force to support economic growth
- Work to assure that housing is affordable to workers at all income levels
- Assure that County government has staff who are trained in and committed to enhancing the economic as well as environmental and social quality of life.

These programs would be carried out by the County in coordination with appropriate public and private sector groups.







**Bishop's Peak**

The residents of San Luis Obispo County have long recognized and valued the resources that distinguish their home from most other places on earth: beautiful scenery that encompasses mountains, beaches, and rugged coastline; history that begins with Native Americans and continues through European settlement and the twentieth century; and an assemblage of educational and cultural resources that include universities, art, music, and outstanding crafts.

In this setting, the people who live in San Luis Obispo County recognize that time cannot stand still: to preserve and protect their resources, they must also create new economic opportunities that will provide jobs and incomes, as well as housing, for themselves and their children. In the most conservative analysis, if there is no economic growth, children who grow up in the county could be forced to move away as they mature and establish their own households, and replacement workers could be unavailable to fill the existing jobs to be vacated by adults reaching retirement age. Beyond responding to these basic needs, however, economic growth can also enhance the quality of life for current residents of the county, by expanding not only their employment opportunities but also the array of commercial and cultural activities that are supported by the people who live there.

While economic growth is desirable for these reasons, it can also be detrimental: if it occurs in a haphazard manner, or compromises the existing resources that make the County an attractive place, it will prompt some existing businesses to move out and deter

others from coming, thus impeding the ability of existing residents to maintain employment. At an extreme, economic growth could adversely affect the natural beauty and quality of life that make San Luis Obispo County such an attractive place to live.

To help assure that San Luis Obispo County reaps the advantages of economic growth and avoids the disadvantages it may create, the Board of Supervisors commissioned the Economic Advisory Committee, with assistance from the Planning Department, to undertake preparation of this Economic Element of the County General Plan. In so doing, the Board recognized that this element would help County decisionmakers in:

- Establishing a commitment to economic vitality that will provide for the current and future needs of all County residents.
- Setting priorities for types and locations of economic development that are desirable in San Luis Obispo County.
- Identifying strategies for retaining existing businesses and attracting new ones that provide employment for County residents.

In sum, this Economic Element of the County General Plan is intended to establish a focus for future economic development and to guide that development in a way that maximizes the benefits it provides to the County while, at the same time, protecting the resources that are so valuable.

#### **Background: Economic Development Defined**

**“Economic development” is the creation of jobs and incomes.**

Economic development may occur in a variety of ways: through people working at home, occupancy of space in retail, office, industrial, and other nonresidential buildings that is currently vacant, construction of new building space (when current occupancy levels are high enough to make the provision of new space financially feasible), work in non-structure-based locations, such as agriculture, construction, transportation, and maintenance/restoration of environmental resources.

Because the concept of economic development focuses on economic activity, therefore, economic development does not necessarily imply that physical impacts – such as land development – will result. For this reason, the alternate terms (economic vitality, economic prosperity, etc.) are sometimes used to avoid the implication of such impacts.

### **Process of Formulating the Economic Element**

Formulation of the goals, policies, and programs in this Economic Element drew on the enormous amount of work that had previously been done to evaluate the economy of San Luis Obispo County and to describe goals and visions for the future economy. The reports that document this work, and the authors and dates of those reports, included:

- Economic Issues Forum of San Luis Obispo County, A Summary of Proceedings (Stakeholders, 1993)

- San Luis Obispo County Principles, Issues and Strategies for Revitalization (Stakeholders, 1993)
- Latino Community Needs Assessment, Final Report (Latino Outreach Task Force, 1993)
- Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study (Economic Strategies Group, for the County of San Luis Obispo, 1994)
- Overall Economic Development Program (County of San Luis Obispo, 1995)
- Economic Summit, Summary of Proceedings (Economic Advisory Committee, 1995)
- Background, Work Plan and Schedule for Targeted Industry Cluster Committee (City of San Luis Obispo memorandum, 2/7/97)
- Targeted Industry Cluster Committee Final Report (City of San Luis Obispo, 1997)
- Future Communities Project, Summit Summary Notes, Phase III (Foundation for Community Design of the County of San Luis Obispo, 1997)
- San Luis Obispo County General Plan (adopted elements and area plans)

Consideration of these documents was combined with additional economic information gathered by County staff in a series of workshops and issue papers prepared by the consulting firm of Mundie & Associates. These workshops – attended by members of the San Luis Obispo County Economic Advisory Committee, members of other County advisory committees, representatives of non-profit organizations, and other interested persons – were held in December, 1997, February, 1998, and March, 1998. Topics discussed at the workshops included:

- Issues that must be addressed in the Economic Element.
- Economic development goals for San Luis Obispo County.
- Progress that has been made in overcoming obstacles to economic development that were identified in earlier studies.
- Policies and programs that would enable the County to achieve the economic goals that were agreed upon by the workshop participants.

This Economic Element represents the culmination of the workshop process.

## **Organization of This Economic Element**

Following this introduction, the Economic Element is organized into six additional chapters:

- Chapter 2 presents an overview of four goals for economic development. As defined in the “Vocabulary” that comprises Appendix B, a goal is “a general, overall, and ultimate purpose, aim, or end toward which the County will direct effort.” Together, these goals provide a vision that is intended to guide future economic development in San Luis Obispo County.

- Chapter 3 provides a discussion of the context of economic development. Summarizing the findings of the 1994 *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study*, it describes internal and external factors that create opportunities for and obstacles to economic development in San Luis Obispo County.
- Chapter 4 is devoted to Goal 1 (balancing economic, environmental, and social considerations in San Luis Obispo County) and its implementing policies and programs. A policy, according to the Vocabulary in Appendix B, is “more specific than a goal . . . a statement that guides decisionmaking.” Thus, the policies included in this element provide a reference point for decisionmakers, such as the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, and are intended to guide their consideration of the economic aspects of planning and development proposals.

Appendix B defines a program as “an action that may be initiated by the county or other public agencies to achieve specific community objectives.” The Vocabulary goes on to note, however, that “because programs are recommended actions rather than mandatory requirements,” county implementation should be based on a variety of conditions, including “community needs, support for the program, its related cost, and available funding.”

- Chapters 5, 6, and 7 present equivalent content for Goals 2, 3, and 4.
- Appendix A identifies responsibility, funding, and priorities for implementation of the programs of this Economic Element.
- Appendix B provides a Vocabulary for the Economic Element, defining key terms used in this document.

*Note: The goals, policies, and programs contained in the Economic Element are not prioritized.*

## Overview of Goals



The goals of the Economic Element recognize the importance of economic activity in enabling the residents of San Luis Obispo County to find employment and pursue the lifestyles that they value. The goals address four aspects of economic development, which are described further following the particular goals to which they apply.

### **Goal 1. Promote a strong and viable local economy by pursuing policies that balance economic, environmental, and social needs of the county.**

Economic activity is important, but equally important are environmental and social factors that contribute to the County's quality of life.

### **Goal 2. Create a diverse economy.**

Economic development will be most beneficial to San Luis Obispo County if it includes a variety of economic activities, so that the risks associated with business cycles for particular industries are avoided, and a variety of occupations, so that workers with different sets of skills will be able to find employment.

### **Goal 3. Assure the provision of strategically-located opportunities for economic development.**

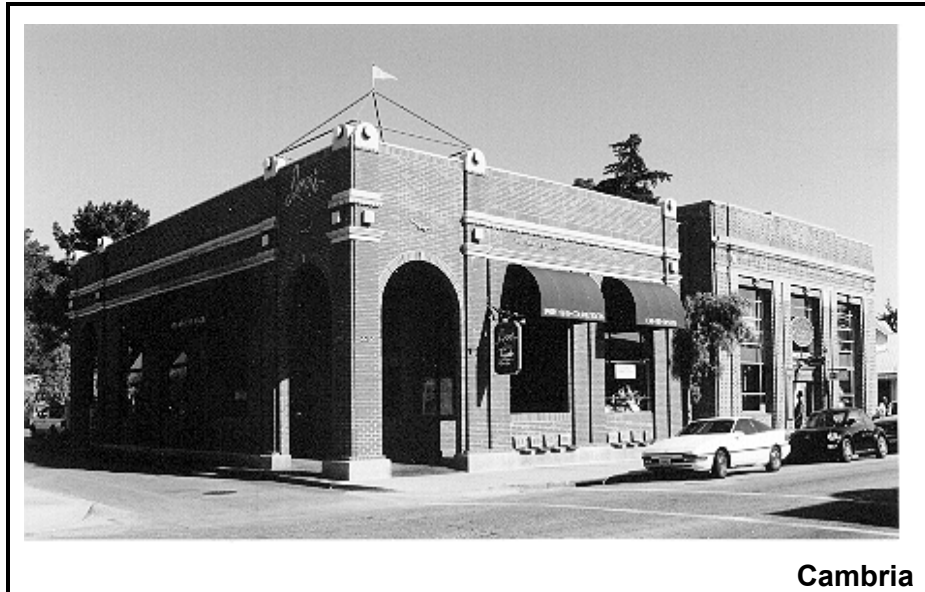
Economic development, except for rural activities such as agriculture and outdoor recreation, should be located in or near existing cities or unincorporated communities (urban reserves and villages) and areas approved as new urban reserves and villages in the County Land Use Element, to facilitate access to existing infrastructure and economic support systems as well as protect the natural environment of rural areas.

### **Goal 4. Provide support for economic development in San Luis Obispo County.**

While the designation of sites for economic development is an important component of an economic development strategy, other types of support are necessary as well. They include, for example, attention to permit processing, access to financing, education of workers and future workers, and business and community support for business.

### 3

## The Context of Economic Development



The *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study*, completed in 1994, evaluated the factors that make San Luis Obispo an attractive place for business and identified some factors that work against economic development in the County. (Note: Since the study was completed, some conditions may have changed.) These factors were classified into six categories:

### Definitions of Factors that Help or Hinder Economic Development

	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL
ASSETS	1E. Factors <b>beyond</b> local control or influence, and which can be used by San Luis Obispo County for its economic development advantage	1I. Factors <b>subject to</b> local control or influence, and which can be used by San Luis Obispo County for its economic development advantage
NEUTRALS	2E. Factors <b>beyond</b> local control or influence, and which neither help nor hinder the competitive position of San Luis Obispo	1III. Factors <b>subject to</b> local control or influence, and which neither help nor hinder the competitive position of San Luis Obispo
LIABILITIES	4E. Factors <b>beyond</b> local control or influence, and which create obstacles to economic development in San Luis Obispo County	1V. Factors <b>subject to</b> local control or influence, and which create obstacles to economic development in San Luis Obispo County

Source: *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study*, San Luis Obispo County, 1994



All of the assets – whether internal (and, therefore, subject to local control) or external (and, therefore, beyond local control) – can be used to the County’s advantage in its efforts to attract economic development that is consistent with its adopted goals and values. All of the neutrals are important to monitor: while they neither help nor hinder the County in their current state, positive changes could give the County additional tools for retaining and attracting businesses, while negative changes could prompt commitment to additional programs intended to remove or compensate for obstacles to business retention and attraction. Finally, all of the liabilities – whether internal or external – should be addressed by the County: internal liabilities should be remedied, while external liabilities should be monitored and compensated for to the extent possible.

The assets and liabilities identified in the *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* are summarized in the following charts.

### San Luis Obispo County: Economic Development Assets

	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL
<b>ASSETS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Climate and physical environment</li> <li>▪ Access to coastal markets</li> <li>▪ Recreational opportunities</li> <li>▪ Higher education opportunities</li> <li>▪ Regional agricultural base</li> <li>▪ Transportation access for goods</li> <li>▪ Abundance of open space</li> <li>▪ Quality of life</li> <li>▪ Tourism potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal security</li> <li>▪ Image as an upscale community</li> <li>▪ Strong arts &amp; culture programs</li> <li>▪ Image as retirement community</li> <li>▪ Small livable communities</li> <li>▪ Secondary education quality</li> <li>▪ Competitive wage levels</li> <li>▪ Underutilized, well-educated work force</li> <li>▪ Local business services</li> <li>▪ Business organization</li> <li>▪ Competitive business taxes</li> <li>▪ Growing sector of cottage industries</li> <li>▪ Well-developed health care system</li> <li>▪ Reasonable lease/rental rates</li> </ul>

Source: *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study*, San Luis Obispo County, 1994

### San Luis Obispo County: Economic Development Neutrals

	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL
<b>NEUTRALS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peripheral location</li> <li>▪ Air transportation services</li> <li>▪ Reliable energy services</li> <li>▪ Motor and rail freight costs</li> <li>▪ Potential for seismic activity</li> <li>▪ Water resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capital availability*</li> <li>▪ Economic development support</li> <li>▪ Solid waste capacity</li> </ul>

\* Capital availability has improved since the completion of the *Business Retention* study.

Source: *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study*, San Luis Obispo County, 1994

### San Luis Obispo County: Economic Development Liabilities

	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strong regional competition</li> <li>▪ State impact on local government financing</li> <li>▪ Cost of doing business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited inventory of improved non-residential land and built space</li> <li>▪ Uncompetitive land prices</li> <li>▪ Supply of nonresidential real estate</li> <li>▪ Housing market is mismatched with local job base</li> <li>▪ Local water and sewer infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Local airport offers limited number of destinations</li> <li>▪ Limited economic development delivery</li> <li>▪ Local government micro-management</li> <li>▪ No public agreement on growth issues</li> <li>▪ Local regulatory process is slow</li> </ul>

\* Conditions regarding water capacity and air service have changed since the *Business Retention* study was completed in late 1993, and are now more constrained than they were at that time.

Source: *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study*, San Luis Obispo County, 1994

Considered together, these three charts indicate that the external factors that make San Luis Obispo County such an attractive place to live and visit – including its natural beauty, recreational opportunities, abundance of open space, and peripheral location – also result in some liabilities in attracting economic development because they contribute to higher costs of doing business. At the same time, most of the liabilities identified in the study are internal, which means that the County can influence them by taking appropriate actions. Many of the programs included in this Economic Element are intended to remedy those internal liabilities.

## 4

### Balancing Economic, Environmental, and Social Considerations



Morro Bay

**Goal 1. Promote a strong and viable local economy by pursuing policies that balance economic, environmental, and social needs of the county.**

***Policy 1a. Pursue economic development activities that will benefit the economy while maintaining the quality of life.***

One of the great attractions of San Luis Obispo is the appearance of the area, with its well-defined urban areas set amid rolling hills that offer an attractive visual environment along with access to open space activities.

**Program 1a1.** *Target the industry clusters that match skills of the existing labor force.*

#### **Background: Targeted Industries**

The *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* identified those industries that, among other things, match the skills of the San Luis Obispo County labor force. Those industries are:

- Q Ag-based cluster:** agricultural services, biotechnology, and food processing.
- Q Construction-based cluster:** development services.
- Q Environmental-based cluster:** environmental technology.
  - **Health-based cluster:** health care and biotechnology.
- Q Computer-based cluster:** software development, information processing & computer services, telecommunications & high tech multi-media. (Industries in this cluster have come to be known as “information-based” or “knowledge-based” industries.)
  - **Business services-based cluster:** financial & insurance services, professional services, business services, & sales.
- Q Tourism-based cluster:** tourism & lodging.
  - **Light industrial cluster:** printing & publishing, textiles & apparel.

Q = highly recommended or particularly recommended for SLO County.

December, 1994

In addition to the clusters defined in the study, there is also an opportunity to target businesses related to the space industry developing at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

#### **Background: Occupations**

Additional information about the skills of San Luis Obispo County workforce is provided by the 1990 U.S. Census. This information can be used by County staff, the Economic Advisory Committee, the Economic Vitality Corporation, the Chambers of Commerce, and other economic development organizations in targeting businesses that will meet the needs of the County's workforce.

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, the most common occupations in San Luis Obispo County at that time were professional/specialty occupations (14.7%), administrative support occupations (13.7%), service occupations (excluding protective and household services; 13.7%), sales occupations (12.9%), and precision production, craft, and repair occupations (12.3%).

#### **Distribution of Occupations, 1990**

### San Luis Obispo County

Occupation	Number	Percent
Managerial and professional specialty occupations		
Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations	10,509	10.8%
Professional specialty occupations	14,326	14.7%
Technical, sales, and administrative support occupations		
Technicians and related support occupations	3,685	3.8%
Sales occupations	12,582	12.9%
Administrative support occupations, including clerical	13,307	13.7%
Service occupations		
Private household occupations	400	0.4%
Protective service occupations	2,632	2.7%
Service occupations, except protective and household	13,334	13.7%
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations	4,804	4.9%
Precision production, craft, and repair occupations	11,975	12.3%
Operators, fabricators, and laborers		
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	3,288	3.4%
Transportation and material moving occupations	2,739	2.8%
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	3,836	3.9%
Total	97,417	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1990, Summary Tape File 3A, Table P078

### Occupations of Unemployed Residents, 1990

Occupation	Number	Percent
Executive/Managerial	169	3.9%
Professional Specialty	181	4.2%
Technicians	81	1.9%
Sales	685	15.8%
Clerical/Administrative Support	455	10.5%
Service	628	14.5%
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	355	8.2%
Precision Production	607	14.0%
Machine Operators/Assemblers	191	4.4%
Transportation/Material Moving	218	5.0%
Laborers	556	12.8%
Unknown	217	5.0%
Total	4,343	100.0%

Source: *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study*, San Luis Obispo County, 1994

**Background: Employment by Industry**

Historical information about employment/unemployment rates and employment by industry may be obtained from the California Employment Development Department. The most recent data available (March, 1999) indicate that the unemployment rate in San Luis Obispo County has fallen steadily since 1993, and that the industries with the greatest numbers of employees are trade, services, and government. More detailed information, presented in Appendix C, reveals that retail trade and local government were the largest industries (in terms of employment) in 1998.

**Employment by Industry  
San Luis Obispo County  
1990-1998**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>
Mining	200	200	200	300	200	100	100	100	100
Construction	4,200	3,600	3,200	3,000	3,400	3,600	3,800	4,100	4,400
Manufacturing	5,900	5,500	6,000	5,700	5,800	6,300	6,700	6,800	7,200
Durable Goods	3,300	3,000	3,400	3,200	3,100	3,200	3,400	3,600	4,000
Nondurable Goods	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,700	3,000	3,300	3,200	3,300
Transportation & Public Utilities	4,200	4,200	4,500	4,300	4,400	4,300	4,400	4,500	4,600
Trade	22,000	19,800	19,100	18,600	19,700	20,400	20,600	21,000	22,000
Wholesale Trade	2,100	2,200	2,000	2,000	2,100	2,300	2,500	2,600	2,800
Retail Trade	20,000	17,600	17,100	16,600	17,600	18,100	18,100	18,400	19,200
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	5,200	5,300	4,900	4,300	4,500	4,400	4,200	4,400	4,600
Services	16,500	17,600	17,300	17,600	18,200	19,200	19,900	20,900	22,000
Government	16,900	16,600	18,000	17,600	18,100	18,600	19,300	20,300	21,200
Federal	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700
State & Local	16,200	16,000	17,300	16,800	17,300	17,900	18,600	19,600	20,500

Source: California Employment Development Department

- Policy 1b. Recognize and protect property rights by:***
- Seeking to maintain a balance between the rights of property owners and efforts to plan for the community.
  - Not taking property without just compensation.
  - Recognizing and protecting the rights of all property owners, individuals and groups to participate in planning and land use decisions.

***Policy 1c. Balance the capacity for growth with the resources available.***

- Program 1c1. Continue to use the resource management system to evaluate infrastructure system capacities and constraints. (Same as Program 4d1.)***

Information about land available for development (capacity for growth) is incomplete, making it difficult to assess the County's ability to accommodate new businesses or expansions of existing businesses.

- Program 1c2. Supplement the resource management system by providing an auxiliary reporting system that inventories land available for economic activities and residential development. (Same as Program 3a2.)***

***Policy 1d. Maintain and protect a living environment that is safe, healthful, and pleasant for all residents.***

***Policy 1e. Protect open space resources that make SLO County an attractive place for economic development.***

The rolling hills and grasslands of San Luis Obispo County, which provide visual relief, abundant recreational opportunities, and agricultural diversity, attract business investment and development by industry decisionmakers who seek a high-quality living environment.



***Policy 1f. Protect agricultural resources that make San Luis Obispo County an attractive place for economic development.***

San Luis Obispo County has an active agricultural industry that is expected to remain viable.

Although agricultural viability cannot be guaranteed by government actions alone, the County can use its authority over land use and zoning designations in the unincorporated area to take actions that will help conserve open space and protect agriculture. Also, the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (the “Williamson Act”) provides an incentive for landowners to keep land in agriculture, by providing for assessment of value based on agriculture use rather than “highest and best use” (and, therefore, reducing property taxes) in exchange for a 10-year commitment to restrict development on the land (for example, through a Williamson Act contract).

Programs to promote the viability of agricultural activities are included in this element under Policy 2f.

***Policy 1g. Assure that County government has staff who are trained in and committed to enhancing the economic as well as environmental and social quality of life.***

One of the obstacles to economic development in San Luis Obispo County that was identified in the *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* was the need for an effective system that links an overall county economic development provider with the city-specific efforts, and with statewide efforts. Trained and committed County staff could coordinate with the Economic Vitality Corporation (EVC) and other agencies on this effort.

***Policy 1h. Work closely with state, regional, and local agencies to achieve common economic development goals.***

**Background: Economic Development at the State Level**

The California Trade and Commerce Organization (TCO) is the state's economic development agency. TCO's website provides information on industries, permitting, financing, and other helpful topics.

SLO County agencies (Visitor & Conference Bureau, Chamber of Commerce) already have links to parts of TCO's website.

***Program 1h1. Work with each city to define areas of agreement on economic goals.***

Sometimes, County and City goals and priorities for economic development appear to differ. The economy of the entire county would benefit if the County and respective cities work together to find common ground in their economic development efforts.

***Program 1h2. Maintain and improve, as appropriate, a county-wide system for delivery of economic development services. At a minimum, this system should include:***

- Continued support for the County Economic Vitality Corporation (EVC) and the Economic Advisory Committee (EAC).
- Working with City economic development directors to achieve mutual economic development goals.
- Support for the Economic Collaboration Committee.

***Program 1h3. Continue support for an annual economic forecast that provides a comprehensive look at the County's economy. Encourage presentation of economic data by County subarea.***

***Program 1h4. Identify and pursue additional avenues to work with the State Trade and Commerce Organization.***

***Policy 1i. Encourage businesses that promote the concept of sustainability.***

***Program 1i1. Assist in establishing an educational program for businesses to show how they can profit from sustainable environmental business practices, including recycling, commuting alternatives for employees, and water and energy conservation.***

## 5

### Types of Economic Activity: Industries and Occupations



San Luis Obispo Farmers Market

#### Goal 2. Create a diverse economy.

**Policy 2a.** *In evaluating proposed plans and projects, consideration of potential economic benefits should be in balance with environmental and social considerations.*

**Program 2a1.** *Encourage the preparation of economic impact analyses to evaluate the potential impacts of proposed land use plans and major projects on jobs and incomes in the County.*

Economic analysis, as defined in Appendix B, evaluates the impacts of policy, planning, and development actions on the private sector economy, and typically measures those impacts in terms of jobs and incomes.

***Policy 2b. Pursue a diverse, countywide, comprehensive economic development strategy that considers cultural, environmental, and social resources.***

This policy recognizes that San Luis Obispo County has a number of recognized resources that should be integrated into a comprehensive economic development strategy. They include, for example:

- Educational institutions, such as Cal Poly, Cuesta College, the local school districts, and other educational, technical and vocational facilities.
- The natural attractions of the County, including Morro Bay, Oso Flaco Lake, coastal access, and mountains.
- The existing agricultural base, including vineyards, orchards, other cultivated crops, and livestock.
- Historical and cultural resources, such as Hearst Castle and the Performing Arts Center.
- Recreational amenities, such as Lopez Lake, Lake Nacimiento, and extensive hiking trails.

In addition, the County has a number of resources that may not be fully recognized, and which could support additional tourism. They include:

- Mission San Miguel and the nearby Rios-Caledonia Adobe.
- Elephant seals on some north County beaches.
- The melodrama and the sand dunes in Oceano.
- Historic restoration projects throughout the County.
- Hot springs, trails, and the Port San Luis Lighthouse near Avila Beach.

Arts and cultural events are amenities that help attract economic development to the County. Information about cultural and arts activities throughout San Luis Obispo County are available from the Arts Council, located in the City of San Luis Obispo.

***Policy 2c. Create an economy that includes jobs all across the income spectrum.***

Just as the economy of San Luis Obispo should be diverse in terms of the types of industries it includes, it should also be diverse in the types of jobs it provides within those industries. The full range of jobs is needed to provide employment for all County residents in the labor force.

***Program 2c1. Continue to work with existing economic development organizations such as the Economic Vitality Corporation, Chambers of Commerce, Visitor and Conference Bureau, and building and trades associations to identify and respond to the County's need for jobs and for labor force to fill available employment opportunities.***



**SLO Airport Area**

**Background: Wage Data for Selected Occupations**

Information from the State Employment Development Department indicates that starting wages (no experience) in San Luis Obispo County in late 1997 ranged from \$5.25 per hour (retail sales) to nearly \$17.00 per hour (union computer programmers), while wages for experienced workers ranged from \$7.75 per hour (truck drivers, route workers) to \$25 per hour (physical therapists). Data for a variety of occupations are summarized below.

According to the Employment Development Department, average hourly earnings for all agricultural workers in the South Coast Region, which includes SLO County, was \$7.86 in January, 1999.

**Typical Wages for Different Occupations  
San Luis Obispo County, 1997**

	<b>No Experience</b>	<b>Experienced</b>	<b>3 Years With Firm</b>
Automotive Mechanics	\$6.50	\$10.86	\$16.00
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks, Including Bookkeepers <i>Union</i>	7.00	8.00 10.77	10.00 12.47
Computer Programmers, including Aides <i>Union</i>	11.42 16.98	15.26 19.63	20.43
Cooks - Restaurant	6.00	7.25	8.50
First Line Supervisors and Managers/ Supervisors - Sales and Related Occupations	9.38	11.00	14.18
General Office Clerks <i>Union</i>	6.50 9.38	7.25 9.50	8.98 10.94
Home Health Care Workers	7.13	8.33	10.08
Instructional Aides <i>Union</i>	4.80 7.30	5.25 7.71	6.77 8.68
Licensed Vocational Nurses	10.50	10.90	12.59
Medical Assistants	7.00	8.50	10.00
Medical Records Technicians	6.60	7.00	8.75
Paralegal Personnel	9.39	11.81	14.38
Physical Therapists	n.a.	22.00	25.00
Physical Therapy Aides	6.00	7.00	8.50
Physical Therapy Assistants	9.00	12.00	14.00
Registered Nurses <i>Union</i>	13.00 15.28	13.96 17.01	15.75 19.81
Salespersons - Retail (except vehicle sales)	5.25	5.50	8.63
Systems Analysts - Electronic Data Processing <i>Union</i>	10.77 12.91	17.26 13.86	21.85 14.63
Truck Drivers - Heavy or Tractor Trailer	8.63	11.00	12.50
Truck Drivers, Light - Including Delivery and Route Workers	5.50	6.75	7.75

Source: State of California Employment Development Department (World Wide Web)

***Policy 2d. Promote economic development that will enhance job opportunities for existing county residents.***

The *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* identified target industries that match the occupational skills of the existing labor force and the skills that students gain when they attend the County's institutions of higher learning. According to the study, "The occupational mix of the County's work force is centered on services, sales, administrative support, and managerial positions. This range of occupations could support a wide variety of office-using industries." (Occupational Assessment, p. 27)

With ongoing changes in technology and their effects on patterns of work (and residence), the occupational mix of the county may be changing. Tables on pp. 43 and 44 of this element identify occupations currently expected to provide the greatest numbers of new and replacement jobs in San Luis Obispo County between 1994 and 2001.

***Policy 2e. Work with the private sector to improve job opportunities for underemployed and low income persons.***

There are a number of post-secondary job training programs in San Luis Obispo County (see p. 39 of this Element).

***Program 2e1. Maintain bulletin boards of employment opportunities in San Luis Obispo County at locations throughout the County to provide information to unemployed residents.***

***Program 2e2. Work with the State Employment Development Department and the job training programs to provide information about job opportunities and services available to assist job seekers (such as interview training, child care, and transportation).***



***Policy 2f. Take action to help agriculture remain economically viable.***

Although agricultural viability cannot be guaranteed by government actions, the county can take some actions to support agriculture.

***Program 2f1.*** *Monitor conversions of agricultural land to insure that (1) such conversion does not adversely affect surrounding agricultural operations, (2) there are adequate services to support a non-agricultural land use, and (3) the land to be converted is contiguous to an urban area or village area and thus could be designated urban land.*

***Program 2f2.*** *Continue to implement the County's Right-to-Farm Ordinance and Agricultural Buffer Policy, which (1) require notice to new residents that potentially noisy or odorous agricultural activities exist nearby and are protected, (2) prescribe setbacks for new development away from agricultural activities, and (3) otherwise establish the right of agriculture to continue even if population growth occurs nearby.*

***Program 2f3.*** *Support the concept of permit visitor-oriented agricultural uses ("agri-tourism"; e.g., farmers' markets, wine tasting rooms, food processing tours, ranch vacations, pick-your-own promotional trails), small bed-and-breakfast inns, and recreation-oriented uses (e.g., horseback riding, fishing ponds) on appropriate agricultural land to enhance agricultural viability.*

***Program 2f4.*** *Support and consider expanding the types of compatible small business uses allowed on agricultural land to supplement incomes generated by agricultural activities.*

Where agricultural use does not by itself generate an adequate income to support the landowner, supplemental small business activities that occupy a limited portion of the site may help preserve farmland and farming. Auxiliary uses currently allowed by the County include roadside stands, limited outdoor retail sales, home occupations, food processing (where the foods to be processed are grown onsite), and filming.



**Highway 46 West**

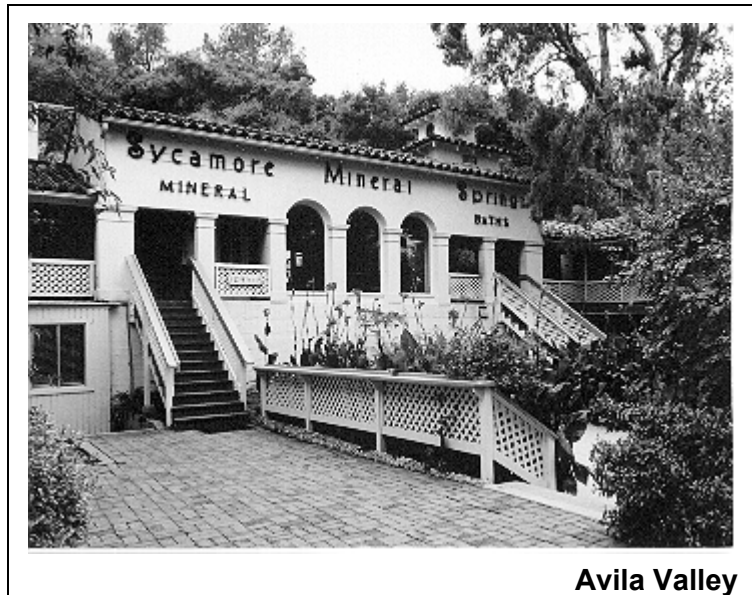
***Program 2f5.***     *Continue to support and expand programs that promote the viability of agriculture at the local, state, and federal levels.*

***Policy 2g.***        *Continue to develop a diverse, countywide tourist industry that relates to the historical, cultural, recreational, and natural attractions of the County.*

Strategies for attracting additional tourism could be as diverse as the environment of San Luis Obispo County. For example, in addition to the agri-tourism described in Program 2f3, niche markets could be further developed that focus on small historical towns and buildings (cultural tourism), wildlife observation (nature-based tourism), sports such as boating, golf, surfing, and windsurfing (recreational tourism), and kayaking, cycling, and horseback riding (soft adventure tourism).

**Program 2g1.** *Continue to support the Visitor and Convention Bureau and the Central Coast Tourism Council's efforts to strengthen the identity of San Luis Obispo County as a regional destination and to increase the duration of visitor stays.*

**Program 2g2.** *Continue to support the development of visitor attractions and amenities such as festivals, museums, farmers' markets, fine restaurants, wine tasting, and shopping opportunities.*



## 6

### Locations for Economic Development



SLO County Airport

### **Goal 3. Assure the provision of strategically-located opportunities for economic development.**

***Policy 3a.***      *Encourage a pattern of commercial and/or industrial development that is consistent with the General Plan, convenient to patrons, realistically related to market demand and the needs of the community, and, when compatible, near areas designated for residential use.*

***Program 3a1.***    *Assure that the County General Plan and subarea plans designate sufficient amounts of suitable land for the types of office, commercial, and industrial uses that are desired in the County.*

**Background: Expected Employment Growth**

According to the 1998 San Luis Obispo County Economic Outlook, total employment in the County is expected to increase by 21 percent between 1991 and 2006, adding nearly 25,500 new jobs. Of those, about 19,000 new jobs are expected to be non-farm wage and salary jobs in industries that occupy building space. (Another 5,000 positions are expected to be non-farm proprietors.)

A rough estimate of the building space and land area that will be needed *countywide* (including land within cities) to accommodate all employment growth (excluding the proprietors) is shown below.

**Expected Countywide Employment Growth and  
Need for New Building Space, 1997-2006**

Type of Space	Added Jobs 1997-2006	Added Building Space Needed (Sq. Ft.)	Added Acres Needed
Office	8,742	2,622,500	120
Retail Trade	4,869	1,704,150	160
Industrial/Warehouse	2,058	1,234,800	90

**Program 3a2.** *Supplement the resource management system by providing an auxiliary reporting system that inventories land available for economic activities and residential development. (Same as Program 1c2.)*

**Background: Land Available for Development**

Data on land available for commercial, office, and industrial development are more complete for some areas than for others. Available information is summarized below.

**Land Area Designated in Area Plans for  
Commercial, Office, and Industrial Development  
(Unincorporated Area Only; Total Acres\*)**

Planning Area	Commercial Retail	Commercial Service	Office & Professional	Industrial
Salinas River Valley				
San Miguel	33	12	6	23
Santa Margarita	9	5	0	13
Templeton	216	72	80	130
Wellsona	38	135	0	21
San Luis Obispo				
Urban Area	49	467	0	325
Los Ranchos/Edna	0	0	0	0
South County				
Rural Area	0	59	0	1,255
Callendar-Garrett	0	0	0	181
Nipomo	112	97	58	0
Palo Mesa	11	0	0	0
Estero				
Cayucos	17	1	5	0
Los Osos	69	24	57	0
North Coast				
San Simeon Acres	47	0	0	0
Cambria	74	18	16	0
Rural North Coast	20	0	0	0
San Luis Bay				
Arroyo Grande	0	21	0	0
Avila	48	0	0	51
Oceano	26	32	0	18
Pismo Beach	0	0	0	0

\* Figures include both developed and undeveloped land.

Source: San Luis Obispo County Planning Department

### **Additional Background: Land Available for Development**

County planning documents designate sufficient amounts of suitable land for reasonably-expected commercial and industrial development:

- San Miguel: Business development could increase by six times.
- Santa Margarita: Commercial development could double.
- Templeton: Commercial development could increase by 13 times, offices by 3 times, and industrial capacity by more than 3 times.
- Wellsona: Available acreage is three times the existing amount of development.
- Cayucos: Retail development could increase by 30 percent and office/professional development by 20 percent.
- Los Osos: Commercial development, including office, could increase by 30 percent.

Information on vacant land in other areas is not readily available.

***Program 3a3.***     *Encourage the participation of Cal Poly, Cuesta College, and businesses throughout the County in the activities of the California Central Coast Research Partnership.*

***Program 3a4.***     *Explore the feasibility of incentives, such as redevelopment or targeted public investment, to attract new development.*

***Policy 3b.***        ***Encourage the phasing of urban development in a compact manner, first using vacant or underutilized parcels, lands next to existing development, and other lands approved in the General Plan for new development.***

This policy, along with the Land Use Element of the County General Plan, is intended to guide the locations for new development. The Design Guidelines Manual provides guidance for the design characteristics of that development, intended to support projects that are attractive and friendly to pedestrians and other customers.

***Policy 3c. Work closely with cities to provide continuity between City and County land use planning and to achieve a balance between economic and housing growth.***

County and City staff and decisionmakers should coordinate efforts in this area.

***Program 3c1. Encourage the City of San Luis Obispo to complete annexation of the Airport area.***

***Program 3c2. Pursue additional arrangements for revenue sharing among cities and unincorporated communities within the county.***

At certain times and in certain locations, counties are interested in attracting and permitting economic development in the unincorporated area in order to enhance their revenue bases. Revenue-sharing arrangements (such as sales tax sharing) allow the county to share in the taxes generated by new development even if it locates in an incorporated area. Such agreements provide multiple benefits, including (1) encouragement for infill development that maximizes use of existing infrastructure and preserves outlying open and agricultural lands and (2) avoidance of increased demand for ongoing services, such as police and fire protection, in outlying areas.

***Policy 3d. Encourage economic development that will provide employment opportunities in communities with high unemployment and that are distant from existing job opportunities.***

**Background: Unemployment**

According to the 1997 Regional Profile, San Miguel, Oceano, and Lake Nacimiento have the highest unemployment rates in the county, while Templeton has the lowest unemployment rate among unincorporated areas.

Subareas with the greatest numbers of unemployed workers are the urban areas: San Luis Obispo (1,200), Paso Robles (530), and Atascadero (460). The Five Cities area (Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, Oceano, Pismo Beach) has an estimated 1,140 unemployed residents.



**Program 3d1.** *Update, as necessary, urban-level design standards (e.g., for streets, curbs, gutters, landscaping, access, parking, etc.) for new commercial and industrial development in the unincorporated areas.*

**Program 3d2.** *Encourage mixed uses in planning areas to avoid segregation between residential and business areas with resulting long commutes.*



#### **Background: Journey to Work Statistics**

Data from the 1990 U.S. Census provide some information about where people who live in different areas work. For San Luis Obispo County, it is most appropriate to consider the commute relationships by planning area, because many of the cities are close together (e.g., in the San Luis Bay planning areas). Commute relationships are summarized below.

The data show that San Luis Obispo (figures are for the city only) had about 13,000 more jobs than employed residents in 1990, while the Estero Planning Area had about 5,000 fewer jobs than employed residents and the San Luis Bay Planning Area had about 4,700 fewer jobs than employed residents. Both of these latter areas would be good candidate locations for economic development, while the San Luis Obispo area would be a good candidate location for more housing.

**Jobs and Housing:  
San Luis Obispo County Commuting Patterns, 1990**

<b>Planning Area</b>	<b>Percent of Employed Residents Working in Area</b>	<b>Percent of Jobholders Living in Area</b>	<b>Outcommute (Pct. of Employed Residents)</b>	<b>Incommute (Pct. of Jobholders)</b>	<b>Jobs - Employed Residents</b>
Estero	40%	80%	60%	20%	-5,179
North Coast	53%	73%	47%	27%	-282
Salinas River	64%	69%	36%	31%	21
San Luis Bay	48%	72%	52%	28%	-4,734
San Luis Obispo	78%	48%	22%	52%	13,321
South County	17%	45%	83%	55%	-1,154
Unincorporated	24%	45%	76%	55%	-12,261
King City*	n.a.	n.a.			26
Santa Maria*	n.a.	n.a.			2,238
<p>* Jobs - Employed Residents is number of commuters into SLO County.</p> <p>Note that workers living in the unincorporated area of the county cannot be assigned to planning areas given the data available. In this discussion, "unincorporated" means living or working in a location <i>other than</i> the following places: Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Los Osos, Cambria, Cayucos, Paso Robles, Grover City, Morro Bay, Nipomo, Oceano, Pismo Beach, San Luis Obispo (city), and Templeton.</p> <p>The data also show that about 2,200 people who live in Santa Maria commute to jobs somewhere in SLO County. About one-half of these jobs are in the San Luis Obispo and San Luis Bay Planning Areas, and about one-third are in the unincorporated area.</p> <p>Not shown in the table above are about 3,800 people who live in SLO County and who commute to jobs in Santa Maria. Nearly 1,200 of those live in the San Luis Bay Planning Area, nearly 1,000 in the unincorporated area, and almost 900 in the South County Planning Area.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Source: Council of Governments</p>					

**Background: Location-Specific Opportunities for and Obstacles to Attracting Economic Development**

**Opportunities:** The Five Cities area, San Luis Obispo, Atascadero, Templeton, Paso Robles, and San Miguel are all well-located with respect to transit: they are situated along U.S. 101, which is a major north-south transportation route, and have rail service as well.

In addition, Nipomo has freeway access but lacks rail access, while Oceano has rail access but lacks freeway access.

**Obstacles**

**Limited Sites.** The Five Cities area has limited land available for new economic development.

**Lack of Support.** San Miguel is in need of additional business infrastructure (business services and business-related retailing/ wholesaling); tourist-related infrastructure appears adequate for the current level of visitation. Potential for tourist-related development is limited by the fact that its primary attraction is most likely to hold visitor attention for only a few hours, and therefore is unlikely to create an overnight destination for the community.

**Design Standards.** Consistent with its policy that urban development should be located in cities and villages, the County has not provided urban infrastructure and has only recently approved urban-level design standards on industrial development in the unincorporated portions of the San Luis Obispo, Salinas River, and South County planning areas. In the short term, lack of such standards may attract businesses that desire an inexpensive location; in the long term, however, urban-level standards assure that investments in economic facilities, such as buildings in business parks, hold their value.

## Support for Economic Development



Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

### Goal 4. Provide support for economic development in San Luis Obispo County.

**Policy 4a.** *Develop programs for the retention and expansion of existing business, and the attraction of new businesses, that are consistent with community goals.*

#### Financing for Economic Development

The *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* identifies the need for an organized effort to provide financing for business needs.

**Program 4a1.** *Continue participation in the Economic Vitality Corporation's Revolving Loan Fund to provide capital for business retention, expansion, and attraction.*

**Program 4a2.** *Continue to work with banks/financial institutions and the Small Business Administration to provide capital for business retention, expansion, and attraction.*

**Program 4a3.** *Encourage the creation of local private sector financing groups.*

**Program 4a4.** *Encourage creation of a seed capital fund.*

**Program 4a5.** *Encourage venture capitalists to invest in the county.*

**Program 4a6.** *Take advantage of funding that is becoming available at California Space and Technology Alliance.*

#### **Businesses for Economic Development**

**Program 4a7.** *Recruit business involvement in economic development.*

**Program 4a8.** *On appropriate occasions, use teams of County and private sector representatives to attract priority industries.*

#### **Education for Economic Development**

**Program 4a9.** *Continue to work with the Small Business Development Center and partnerships of local businesses and educational organizations.*

#### **Promoting Economic Development**

**Program 4a10.** *Encourage a “Welcome Back Weekend” for alumni of Cal Poly and other County educational institutions who own or are executives in the cluster industries.*

**Program 4a11.** *Identify and consider participation in industry trade shows in the Bay Area or the Los Angeles area.*



Oceano

### **Other Programs for Economic Development**

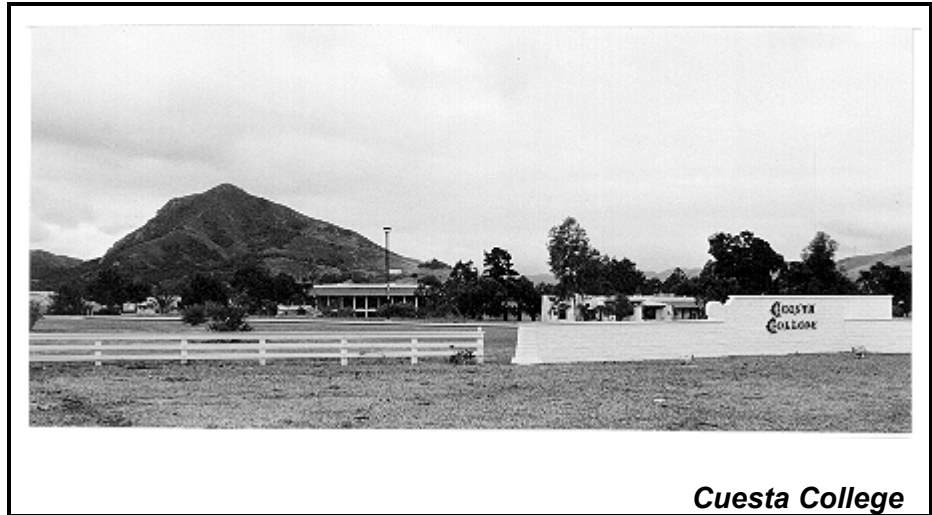
***Program 4a12.*** *Encourage the development of incubator buildings that meet the needs of start-up businesses.*

***Policy 4b.*** *Assure that SLO County has an adequate supply of appropriately-skilled labor for economic development by supporting a full range of educational opportunities, including vocational, technical, and professional education.*

One of the needs identified in the *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* was provision of education and training; that is, an overall program to match the needs of the economic clusters with the skills/education of the population to ensure that residents are the primary beneficiaries of business development. Another way of looking at this issue is to assure that education and training programs are available for all county residents, so that they can benefit from any economic growth that occurs.

Although the County has no direct ability to influence educational institutions and training programs unless it can identify funding to contribute to key programs/institutions, it can work closely with existing institutions and programs to facilitate their operations and help publicize their benefits and availability.

**Program 4b1.** *Continue to provide the training and education programs identified in the Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study (which formed part of the basis for the conclusions of that study).*



**Cuesta College**

**Program 4b2.** *Continue to support post-secondary educational programs, including adult education classes, Private Industry Council, Regional Occupation Program, Center for Education and Training (CET), industry cooperatives, and matching funds from employers. Support programs at local colleges and universities that are related to the County's employment.*

**Program 4b3.** *Support K-12 educational reform.*

**Program 4b4.** *Identify and support vocational programs.*

### **Background: Existing Training Programs**

San Luis Obispo has a wide array of vocational training programs, including:

- **Private Industry Council of San Luis Obispo (PIC).** Classroom instruction (at Cuesta College, Cal Poly, and the local high schools) and on-the-job training programs; job search classes, volunteer internships, mentoring programs, and summer youth work experience programs. Other programs include Fifty Five Plus, North County Learning Center (Paso Robles), dislocated worker retraining programs (in cooperation with the EDD), Medical Occupation Program.
- **California Employment Development Department (EDD).** Placement and training assistance, Employer Advisory Council (job skills workshops for high school seniors), Job Match (matches qualified applicants with employer job orders).
- **San Luis Obispo Regional Occupation Program (ROP).** Classroom and on-the-job training through area high schools and Cuesta College; short-term training programs for entry-level jobs.
- **Economic Opportunity Commission (EOC).** Training programs in health services and child care provision; other programs include head start and homeless services.
- **Technical Preparation.** High school and community college programs for vocational training (starting in 11th grade, continuing through two years of community college).
- **Unions.** Fifteen construction trades have unions with apprenticeship programs in the county.
- **CalWorks (Welfare to Work).** Mandatory job training and placement for aid recipients. Uses services available through Cuesta College, PIC, ROP, EOC, and local adult schools.
- **Center for Education and Training (CET).** Entry-level job skills training and other job readiness programs; located in Santa Maria.
- **Specific vocational programs at area high schools.** For example, Technology Plaza in the Lucia Mar District; work experience program in the Paso Robles District; vocational programs in the San Luis Obispo Coastal District.



### **Background: Educational Institutions**

Post-secondary educational institutions in San Luis Obispo County are:

- **Cuesta College.** Major programs include:
  - Business Education
  - Energy and Technology
  - Nursing and allied health education
  - Institute for Professional DevelopmentCuesta's North County campus, in Paso Robles, opened in Fall, 1998.
- **Cal Poly.** Major programs include:
  - *College of Agriculture:* the Agriculture Safety Institute in the, the Dairy Products Technology Center, and the Irrigation Training and Research Center
  - *College of Architecture:* Design and Construction Institutes, Computer-Aided Design Research Center
  - *College of Business:* Small Business Institute
  - *College of Engineering:* Electric Power Institute, Computer Integrated Manufacturing Center
  - *College of Science and Math.* A new Environmental Biotechnology Institute is planned for this college
  - *College of Liberal Arts.* This college is responsible for development of the Performing Arts Center
  - Other: Brock Center for Agricultural Communication, Coastal Resources Institute
- **Allan Hancock College,** in Santa Maria (Santa Barbara County), also provides educational services to residents of San Luis Obispo County.



**Performing Arts Center, Cal Poly**

***Policy 4c. Support efforts to identify job training needs and job opportunities for residents who are on welfare, unemployed, or underemployed, and to reduce obstacles to employment.***

Economic development efforts will benefit the entire County if they attract jobs that can be filled by the resident unemployed and underemployed population, and if they enhance the ability of that population to hold jobs that are available (either by improving job skills or by removing obstacles that impede their ability to work). Moving labor force-aged residents from welfare to work will reduce pressure on the County treasury for social services as well, and consequently free additional funds for other needed programs.

Federal funds have recently become available for assessment of job readiness and job training needs and for welfare-to-work programs. It may be possible for the County, working with the administering agencies and organizations, to leverage some of these funds to increase their effectiveness in improving the skills of the resident labor force and to attract companies with the potential to hire un- and underemployed residents.

***Program 4c1. Provide assistance in profiling the educational and work experience characteristics of unemployed and underemployed labor force members.***

Information about these workers may help attract companies that need employees with the identified education, skills, and experience.

***Program 4c2. Work with the PIC and EOC to assemble information about types of jobs that are currently available and that are likely to become available in the future, as the current workforce ages and retires.***

In some industries currently located in San Luis Obispo County, current labor shortages or anticipated future labor shortages (as the existing workforce in certain occupations ages and retires) may prompt companies to leave the area. In other industries, there may be a labor surplus that would be attractive to companies that are expanding or relocating in the Central Coast.

Estimates of job openings in the occupations with the greatest projected employment growth are presented on page 43, and occupations with the greatest number of new job openings (combined growth and “separations”) are listed on page 44.

In addition to the occupations identified by the California Employment Development Department, child care workers are also expected to be in demand as welfare-to-work programs move single parents into the full-time labor force.



**Templeton**

**Occupations with the Projected Greatest Absolute Job Growth, 1994-2001  
(Top 25)  
San Luis Obispo County**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Change, 1994-2001</b>
1.	Salespersons – retail (non-vehicle)	420
2.	General managers, top executives	260
3.	Instructional aides	240
4.	Cashiers	220
5.	Waiters and waitresses	210
6.	Janitors, cleaners (except maids)	200
7.	Teachers – secondary school	180
8.	Correction officers, jailers	150
9.	Food preparation workers	140
10.	Secretaries, general	130
11.	Teachers – elementary school	120
12.	Maintenance repairers, general utility	120
13.	General office clerks	110
14.	Maids and housekeeping cleaners	110
15.	Cooks – restaurant	100
16.	Cooks – specialty fast food	100
17.	Financial managers	90
18.	Receptionists, information clerks	90
19.	Combined food preparation and service	90
20.	Nurse aides, orderlies, attendants	90
21.	Automotive mechanics	90
22.	Counter and rental clerks	80
23.	Teachers – special education	70
24.	Systems analysts – electronic data processing	60
25.	Computer programmers, including aides	60

*Source: California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information  
Division, Publications and Information Unit*

**Occupations with the Projected Greatest Number of Job Openings, 1994-2001\***  
**(Top 25)**  
**San Luis Obispo County**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Change, 1994-2001</b>
1.	Salespersons – retail (non-vehicle)	1,280
2.	Cashiers	1,070
3.	Waiters and waitresses	780
4.	Counter attendants – food	600
5.	General office clerks	590
6.	General managers, top executives	570
7.	Janitors, cleaners – except maids	420
8.	Teachers – secondary school	350
9.	Instructional aides	340
10.	Secretaries, general	290
11.	Food preparation workers	260
12.	Maintenance repairers, general utility	260
13.	Teachers – elementary school	250
14.	Cooks – specialty fast food	250
15.	Correction officers, jailers	240
16.	Cooks – restaurant	240
17.	Dining room attendants, bar helpers	220
18.	Receptionists, information clerks	210
19.	Combined food preparation and service	200
20.	Maids and housekeeping cleaners	200
21.	Automotive mechanics	190
22.	Financial managers	160
23.	Nurse aides, orderlies, attendants	160
24.	Registered nurses	150
25.	Sales representatives, non-scientific (except retail)	150

\* Includes new jobs plus separations.

Source: California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division,  
Publications and Information Unit

**Program 4c3.** *Work with the PIC and EOC (and other organizations, as appropriate) to identify opportunities for the County to help reduce or remove obstacles that inhibit the ability of unemployed and underemployed workforce members to become fully employed.*

Obstacles may include conditions such as lack of transportation and/or lack of child care; they may also include lack of job skills and/or “job readiness.” The County may be able to identify surplus public sector resources, such as vacant building space, that could be used for service offices, child care centers, or other facilities.

**Program 4c4.** *Work with the PIC (and other organizations, as appropriate) to identify priorities for local programs that can use state and federal Welfare-to-Work Grant Program funds.*

**Program 4c5.** *Work with community colleges, major employers, economic development agencies, job training organizations, and other public sector agencies to provide career counseling, training, and experience for unemployed and underemployed workers.*

Community colleges are tailoring short courses to the particular occupational or industry needs of employers and workers in San Luis Obispo County. Major employers may be able to provide on-the-job training opportunities. Public agencies and private non-profit organizations may be able to create “community service” opportunities that provide job training.

**Program 4c6.** *Identify opportunities for use of federal welfare-to-work funds on public infrastructure construction projects.*

*The County may be able to set goals for its contractors to incorporate job training and/or local hiring on large publicly-funded projects.*

**Program 4c7.** *Encourage cooperation among developers, employment agencies, and trade unions, to set goals and incentives to encourage the hiring of qualified local residents on the construction of large projects.*



**Mission San Miguel**

**Policy 4d.** *Coordinate infrastructure investment with the economic development strategy.*

One of the obstacles to economic development in San Luis Obispo County that was identified in the *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* was the need for infrastructure improvements. In addition to the “many localized water and sewer capacity constraints” cited by the study, economic development efforts would also benefit from strategically-placed capital improvements, such as public squares and street design, that enhance the livability of business- and visitor-oriented areas.

- Program 4d1.** *Continue to use the resource management system to evaluate infrastructure system capacities and constraints.*
- Program 4d2.** *Schedule and complete periodic comprehensive reviews of infrastructure capacity and design to assure the County's ability to accommodate new economic development that is consistent with adopted goals and policies.*
- Program 4d3.** *Continue to collect public facilities fees on new development consistent with an overall economic development strategy.*
- Program 4d4.** *Target investments in infrastructure to maximize their potential benefits for economic development. Investments may include conventional infrastructure (e.g., streets, curbs, gutters, water, sewer) as well as communications infrastructure (see Program 4d5) and community amenities (e.g., town squares and pocket parks, identity monuments, street furniture) that will enhance the attractiveness of target areas to desired types of development.*
- Program 4d5.** *Plan for expansions of communications infrastructure that will insure local access.*

Expanded internet wiring will be especially valuable in the locations targeted for development of businesses in the computer-based cluster. The City of San Luis Obispo is already wired for fiber optics. Expansion of this network to additional areas of the County is a good candidate for County-City cooperation.

- Program 4d6.** *Coordinate infrastructure policies for the County and region.*
- Program 4d7.** *Encourage air links from SLO County to San Jose, Sacramento, and other key destinations.*



***Policy 4e. Provide housing opportunities for worker households of all income groups.***

According to the *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study*, affordable housing is required for SLO County's survival as a balanced community. Issues that must be addressed for the County to have an effective program of providing or facilitating the provision of affordable housing include land prices, regulatory climate, and infrastructure financing.

***Program 4e1. Continue grant programs to write down land and infrastructure costs for affordable housing.***

***Program 4e2. Continue to provide incentives, such as density bonuses, reduced fees, expedited permit processing, and tax relief, for development of affordable housing and housing for special needs populations.***

***Program 4e3. Continue to provide expedited permit processing for affordable housing.***

***Program 4e4. Encourage development of mixed-use buildings; work with the local bank to get financing for this type of construction.***

***Program 4e5. Explore the potential for development of mixed-income communities to expand the supply of housing affordable to moderate-income worker households.***

Further implementation of housing programs that were adopted in the Housing Element would help provide housing that is affordable to all income groups.

***Program 4e6. Continue using public/private partnerships to construct low-cost housing.***

### **Background: Housing Programs**

The County Housing Element identifies the following housing programs that are intended to encourage the production of affordable housing:

- **Density bonus** for projects providing specified amounts of units for low income, very-low income, and senior households.
- **Simplified permit process** for farmers and ranchers who wish to establish group quarters or individual dwellings for farmworkers.
- Regulations allowing **mobile homes** in all land use categories where conventional single family or multi-family dwellings are allowed.
- An allowance for **secondary dwellings** with size limits that will result in affordable rents.
- An allowance for **residential units in commercial developments**.
- **Expedited processing** of applications for affordable projects.
- Collection of an **Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee**, equal to 3.5 percent of the public facilities fee, on market rate (residential) lots at the time new subdivisions and parcel maps are recorded.
- Provision of **rent subsidies to low income households** (Section 8).
- **Subsidies for the acquisition of land** for homeownership by low and very-low income households, and acquisition of land for affordable rental housing. Funds come from the state Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
- **Permit Processing Streamlining Committee** to identify ways to speed up development processing.
- **First Time Homebuyers Program**
- **Additional land** for multi-family residential development

Programs identified in the Housing Element but not implemented are:

- **Housing Trust Fund**
- **Inclusionary housing program**

***Policy 4f. Minimize administrative delays and costs to fee payers in the administration of the General Plan.***

The *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* states that the San Luis Obispo region presents a difficult regulatory climate, especially for land and building development. It notes that obstacles are found in both permitting and regulatory procedures, as well as in a political climate in which local governments tend to micro-manage, and in which there is no public agreement on how or whether growth should occur.

Policies and programs calling for better coordination between the County and the cities address some of these concerns. (See, for example, Policy 3c and Program 1h1.) Additional programs, focusing on procedures within the County government, are presented below.

- Program 4f1.*** *Continue participation in the Permit Streamlining Committee.*
- Program 4f2.*** *Facilitate direct provision of information needed for economic development projects, minimizing the need to refer inquiries to other departments.*
- Program 4f3.*** *Continue the program of pre-application meetings and site visits.*
- Program 4f4.*** *Facilitate the development process through communication with all members of the community, including residents, business owners, developers, and landowners.*
- Program 4f5.*** *Create an efficient, customer-centered permit process for delivery of services related to economic development.*
- Program 4f6.*** *Continue to develop business assistance teams to facilitate economic development proposals through the review and approval process. Establish criteria for projects that will qualify for expedited processing (e.g., business retentions or expansions, targeted industries, and clean industries).*
- Program 4f7.*** *Develop performance standards to measure progress toward economic development goals and policies.*

**Program 4f8.** *Encourage additional opportunities for public participation and better cooperation between local advisory councils and the County.*

**Program 4f9.** *Consider preparation of specific plan EIRs for urban and village areas, model project-level mitigated negative declarations, or other appropriate measures to streamline subsequent environmental review.*

**Program 4f10.** *Consider including discussions of economic development impacts in staff reports for commercial/industrial projects, where appropriate.*

**Policy 4g.** ***Simplify development review procedures and provide incentives for development to locate where plan policies encourage it to occur.***

**Program 4g1.** *Develop programs for Community-Based Design information and Best Land Management Practice information when proposals are first submitted. Continue to provide information in pre-application meetings about which development standards will apply.*

**Program 4g2.** *Provide a single document that identifies all fees required for development, and append this document to all planning and development applications.*

**Program 4g3.** *Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of waiving some fees for desired types of economic development.*

By waiving some fees, the County would reduce the cost of development. In selecting which fees to waive, the County could provide an incentive for targeted types of development.

At the same time, fee waivers reduce the amount of money available to the County to pay for the facilities and programs the fees are intended to cover.

**Program 4g4.** *Assure “internal readiness” to process permits for targeted industries in an organized and timely fashion.*

**Program 4g5.** *Expand the use of Business Assistance Teams to facilitate processing of applications for new economic uses.*

Business Assistance Teams expedite the processing of applications for high priority economic development projects. Each team, consisting of staff from all affected agencies, is led by a case manager who takes active responsibility for managing the progress of the application through review and consideration, including (1) organizing a meeting prior to or just after an application is submitted to identify all information that will be needed for consideration of the project; (2) assigning a high priority to the application to expedite its progress; and (3) actively monitoring the status of the application to assure its progress through the review process in the affected agencies.

**Program 4g6.** *Identify types of economic development applications that will be handled by Business Assistance Teams.*

Currently, wineries and projects that would accommodate expansions or retentions of existing clean industries are handled by Business Assistance Teams.

**Program 4g7.** *Monitor the progress of targeted economic development projects to ensure that expedited processing goals are met.*

**Policy 4h.** *Provide information that will facilitate economic development.*

**Program 4h1.** *Prepare an economic development package (brochure, diskette, web site) that pulls together information about sites available for development, infrastructure, labor force, educational opportunities, business climate (e.g., government structures, taxes, incentives, Chambers of Commerce), quality of life, demographics, and information about whom to contact for more information.*

**Program 4h2.** *Improve and facilitate access to information about the existing inventory of improved land and buildings that is maintained by the County Assessor, County Planning, and other County departments and agencies.*

One of the internal liabilities inhibiting economic development identified in the *Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction Study* is a shortage of improved land and, especially, buildings for industrial and commercial businesses. Shortages may be perceived or real: where they are merely perceived, providing information about existing resources and opportunities can be a remedy.

**Program 4h3.** *Collect additional data to fill in data gaps about the existing inventory of buildings and improved sites.*

**Program 4h4.** *Publish an inventory of land and buildings on a regular basis.*

**Program 4h5.** *Implement a Countywide GIS system that will provide information about buildings and improved land. Make the system readily accessible and user-friendly.*

**Program 4h6.** *Provide all information related to economic development through a single entity at convenient locations as well as through the County web site.*

**Program 4h7.** *Maintain up-to-date and concise information packets for targeted business recruitment.*

**Program 4h8.** *Develop industry cluster-specific web pages with linkages to other appropriate web sites.*

**Program 4h9.** *Establish a clearinghouse system to identify who has information and in what format; provide training so that people will know how to access data.*

**Program 4h10.** *Continue outreach to/coordination with local brokers, developers and other intermediaries.*

- Program 4h11.*** *Encourage commercial brokers to develop a multiple listing service, or to coordinate in some other way with County staff and the Economic Vitality Corporation.*
- Program 4h12.*** *Continue to revise County regulations to make them simpler and easier to use, and assure that they are up-to-date.*
- Program 4h13.*** *Continue to use a case manager approach to process development permits and insure interagency cooperation.*
- Program 4h14.*** *During the area plan update process, review the inventory of land available for economic development. Where needed, the County will consider designating additional land for economic development when consistent with community goals.*

***Policy 4i. Monitor progress toward economic development goals.***

***Program 4i1. Establish objective measures of progress.***

While goals describe the values that are intended to guide future decisions and policies assure that future decisions and actions will be consistent with those values, neither goals nor policies include measurable indicators of existing conditions. Objective measures could include, for example:<sup>1</sup>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ▪ Number of sites or acres of land ready for development (vacant and served by infrastructure) | ▪ Available but unused water supply (gallons or acre-feet per year)  |
| ▪ Number of key destinations linked to San Luis Obispo Airport by direct flights               | ▪ Unused capacity in water storage facilities or distribution pipelines  |
| ▪ Unemployment rate  | ▪ Remaining capacity in wastewater collection pipelines and treatment plants   |
| ▪ Percent of households able to afford the median-priced house                                 | ▪ Number of new businesses established in, moved to, or moved out of SLO County during the past year (to the extent that information is available) |
| ▪ Roadway capacity, as measured by levels of service on street segments and at intersections   | ▪ Number of businesses expanded or retained.   |

***Program 4i2. Establish and follow a schedule for assessing progress by applying objective measures to current conditions.***





# **Appendix A**

## **Implementation**

To be provided



# **Appendix B**

## **Vocabulary for the Economic Element**

### **Economic Analysis**

Economic analysis considers conditions in the *private sector economy* of an area. Measures used to evaluate these conditions generally include jobs and incomes.

*Together with market analysis, economic analysis provides a foundation for deciding on how much land should be designated for different types of uses.*

### **Fiscal Analysis**

Fiscal analysis examines the direct effects of a proposed project on *local government revenues and costs*. It considers the effects of a project on one jurisdiction (because each jurisdiction has a separate budget). Fiscal analysis usually addresses ongoing and recurring revenues and costs.

*Fiscal analysis helps anticipate future spending obligations as well as constraints on the provision of public services. It also helps anticipate revenue shortfalls and informs the need to identify new revenue sources.*

### **Goal**

A general expression of community values, an ideal future result or condition, based on public health, safety, or general welfare. Goals provide the vision statement of what is the consensus of ideals to be strived for after adoption of this element.

### **Implementation Measures**

Recommended measures that may consist of a series of actions, including such things as future amendments to other components of the county general plan or ordinance code, specific standards that should be applied to the review of development projects, or follow-up studies or programs that should be undertaken in order to carry out the desired goals and policies. Recommended implementation measures may also include actions that are suggested to be undertaken by other county departments, governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, or private parties.

## **Market Analysis**

Market analysis, like economic analysis, considers conditions in the private sector economy. It focuses on the demand for and supply of goods and services. In the planning context, the goods and services of interest are land, infrastructure, and building space (offices, industrial buildings, retail spaces, and housing of different types).

*Together with economic analysis, market analysis provides a foundation for deciding on how much land should be designated for different types of uses. It also provides information about which locations are best for different uses.*

## **Policy**

More specific than a goal, a policy is a statement that guides decision making. Policies are based on the information gathered and analyzed during the process of developing this element.

## **Program**

An action that may be initiated by the county or other public agencies to achieve specific community objectives. Because programs are recommended actions rather than mandatory requirements, county implementation should be based on consideration of community needs, support for the program, its related cost, and available funding.

# Appendix C

## Detailed Labor Force and Employment Data 1990-1998

### Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment San Luis Obispo County 1990-1998

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>	96,200	92,500	95,300	98,100	101,900	101,600	102,500	106,200	108,700
<b>Civilian Employment</b>	91,600	86,800	87,900	89,900	94,700	94,900	96,800	101,200	104,200
<b>Civilian Unemployment</b>	4,600	5,700	7,400	8,200	7,200	6,700	5,700	5,000	4,500
<b>Civilian Unemployment Rate</b>	4.8%	6.2%	7.8%	8.4%	7.1%	6.6%	5.5%	4.7%	4.2%

*Employment by industry on following page*

**Employment by Industry  
San Luis Obispo County  
1990-1998**

Industry	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>Total, All Industries</b>	77,800	75,600	75,800	74,400	77,500	79,900	82,700	87,000	90,200
<b>Total Farm</b>	2,700	2,600	2,600	3,100	3,300	3,000	3,900	4,800	4,200
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	75,100	72,900	73,200	71,400	74,300	76,800	78,800	82,100	86,000
<b>Goods Producing</b>	10,300	9,400	9,400	9,000	9,500	10,000	10,500	11,100	11,700
Mining	200	200	200	300	200	100	100	100	100
Construction	4,200	3,600	3,200	3,000	3,400	3,600	3,800	4,100	4,400
Manufacturing	5,900	5,500	6,000	5,700	5,800	6,300	6,700	6,800	7,200
Durable Goods	3,300	3,000	3,400	3,200	3,100	3,200	3,400	3,600	4,000
Industrial Machinery	0	0	900	700	800	1,000	1,200	1,300	1,400
Electronic Equipment	900	700	800	700	600	600	600	600	700
Other Durable Goods	2,400	2,300	1,700	1,800	1,700	1,600	1,600	1,700	1,900
Nondurable Goods	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,700	3,000	3,300	3,200	3,300
Food & Kindred Products	0	0	400	400	400	500	600	700	700
Printing & Publishing	1,300	1,300	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,400	1,500	1,500
Other Nondurable Goods	1,300	1,300	1,000	1,000	1,200	1,300	1,200	1,100	1,100
<b>Service Producing</b>	64,800	63,600	63,800	62,400	64,800	66,800	68,300	71,000	74,300
Transportation & Public Utilities	4,200	4,200	4,500	4,300	4,400	4,300	4,400	4,500	4,600
Transportation	0	0	1,500	1,400	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,600
Communications & Public Util.	0	0	3,000	2,900	2,900	2,800	2,900	3,000	3,000
Trade	22,000	19,800	19,100	18,600	19,700	20,400	20,600	21,000	22,000
Wholesale Trade	2,100	2,200	2,000	2,000	2,100	2,300	2,500	2,600	2,800
Retail Trade	20,000	17,600	17,100	16,600	17,600	18,100	18,100	18,400	19,200
General Merchandise	0	0	1,200	1,100	1,100	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,300
Food Stores	0	0	2,300	2,300	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,500	2,700
Eating & Drinking Places	0	0	7,400	7,300	7,600	7,900	8,100	7,800	8,100
Other Retail Trade	0	0	6,100	6,000	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,900	7,100
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	5,200	5,300	4,900	4,300	4,500	4,400	4,200	4,400	4,600
Finance	0	0	3,500	2,900	3,000	2,900	2,800	2,800	2,700
Other Fin., Ins. & Real Estate	0	0	1,400	1,400	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,600	1,900
Services	16,500	17,600	17,300	17,600	18,200	19,200	19,900	20,900	22,000
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	0	0	2,100	2,100	2,300	2,300	2,000	2,200	2,300
Business Services	0	0	2,300	2,100	2,100	2,300	2,600	3,100	3,400
Amusement & Recreation Serv.	0	0	1,000	1,000	1,100	1,200	1,200	1,100	1,100
Health Services	0	0	4,900	5,100	5,300	5,500	5,600	5,800	6,000
Social Serv. & Member Orgn	0	0	1,800	1,900	2,500	2,900	3,100	3,200	3,600
Other Services	0	0	5,200	5,300	5,000	5,100	5,400	5,600	5,700
<b>Government</b>	16,900	16,600	18,000	17,600	18,100	18,600	19,300	20,300	21,200
Federal Government	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700
State & Local Government	16,200	16,000	17,300	16,800	17,300	17,900	18,600	19,600	20,500
State Government	0	0	8,200	7,800	8,100	8,400	8,700	8,800	8,800
State Education	0	0	3,100	2,900	3,000	3,200	3,300	3,500	3,500
Other State Government	0	0	5,100	4,900	5,100	5,200	5,300	5,200	5,300
Local Government	0	0	9,100	9,000	9,200	9,500	9,900	10,800	11,700

\* The Foundation for Community Design's *Compact: A Guide for Future Planning* describes some of these measures and some additional measures that may be applicable to measuring progress toward the goals of the Economic Element.